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This eighth-grade language unit stresses developing the student's sensitivity to variations in language, primarily the similarities and differences between spoken and written language. Through sample lectures and discussion questions, the students are helped to form generalizations about language: that speech is the primary form of language; that language is a code; that spoken words are concrete and their referents either concrete or abstract; that language is used for self-expression, transmission of information, and the satisfaction of needs; and that an audience provides important "feedback" to the speaker. Excerpts from the writings of Mark Twain, Robert Penn Warren, and William Faulkner provide students with opportunities to analyze and classify language as standard or nonstandard, formal or informal. In addition, students are encouraged to suggest, from their personal experiences, situations in which varying degrees of speech formality are appropriate. Supplementary activities for able students and a unit test are included. (JS)

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Unit 802

Language Varies With Approach

Grade 8

TE 001 264

CAUTIONARY NOTE

These materials are for experimental use by Project English fellows and their associates who contributed to their development.

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PURPOSE OF THE UNIT

The purpose of this unit is to develop in the eighth grader an awareness of the functional interrelationships between language and the two fundamental approaches to language, that is, whether language is spoken or written. Within varying contexts of language use, the attempt is made to increase the student's sensitivity to variations in language that are relevant to the student's roles as speaker, listener, writer, and reader. Emphasis is placed on the inherent similarities and differences between spoken and written language, within the following situational dimensions: formal - informal, standard - non-standard, time, place, and purpose. Within a descriptive framework which provides essentially objective examination of situations and usage, the rhetorical notion of appropriateness is stressed (studying the conscious manipulation of language to effect the desired response from an audience in a communicative situation.)

In other words, rather than providing the student with static, inflexible rules of usage, this unit is concerned with the varying conventions of usage, the student applying these conventions appropriately within the situations he might face. This does not mean that all the standards of usage which have been taught in the high school or junior high school English class must be discarded. Descriptive study of practical English reveals two things. On the one hand, the usage of the "educated speaker of English" is being increasingly accepted as a widespread standard; on the other hand, the educated speaker of English is becoming more sensitive to the varieties of English usage that might be acceptable within certain contexts. Accordingly, then, this places a two-fold responsibility on the teaching of English. Students should gain proficiency in the use of the most widely accepted and conventional standards, while they must also become more sensitive to other varieties.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Faulkner, William. The Sound and the Fury (New York: Vintage Books, 1956).

Maimstrom, Jean. Language in Society (New York: Hayden Book Co., 1965).

Warren, Robert Penn. All the King's Men (New York: Modern Library, 1953).

CONTENT OUTLINE

I. Introduction--The Nature of Language

II. Varieties of Language

  A. Spoken and written language
    1. Inherent and conventional characteristics of speech
    2. Communication model
    3. Inherent and conventional characteristics of writing
    4. Comparison of spoken and written language
  B. Formal and informal language
  C. Standard and non-standard language

III. Appendix

  A. Keys to Worksheets 2 and 3
  B. Final Examination and key

NOTE ON SEQUENCE OF PART II

The writers of this unit have attempted to approach the varieties of language inductively. The materials are consequently divided into sections treating spoken-written, formal-informal, and standard-non-standard. Depending upon the nature of your students, changes might be necessary in this organization. With able students, it might be more profitable to treat all three of these dimensions at the same time. With average and less able students, however, each section will probably work best if taught separately. Such a treatment will take time, but it is extremely important that students understand each dimension before attempting to synthesize them into a coherent analysis.

For the extremely able students, you might supplement this material by using "The Five Clocks" by Martin Joos. This appears in Part V of the International Journal of American Linguistics, Volume 28, Number 2, April, 1962. It is published by the Indiana University Research Center in Anthropology, Folklore, and Linguistics. This supplement is cautiously recommended, however, since it would be extremely difficult for the eighth grader. Considerable work would be necessary on the part of the teacher who would adapt this material to the junior high classroom.

1. Language varies with approach.

2. Speech is the primary form of language.

3. Writing is a secondary form of language.

4. Language is a code.

5. Speech is an auditory and visual communication process.

6. In addition to the words in speech, the gestures, intonation, stress, etc. that are used by the speaker provide the listener with clues to meaning.

7. Spoken words themselves are concrete, but their REFERENTS may be concrete or abstract.

8. People speak for a variety of purposes: self-expression, transmission of information, attempts to satisfy needs.

9. The speech situation, when the audience is present, allows the speaker to see indications of his success or failure through feedback from the communication process.

10. If the speaker sees that his listeners are confused, he can immediately restate or explain what he has said.

11. Speech is a rhythmic flow of sounds, and the listener, having heard what is said, cannot return to it unless he mentally recreates it, missing whatever the speaker says in the meantime.

12. Language will vary according to whether it is:

    written or spoken
    formal or informal
    standard or non-standard

13. These variations are not absolute but are on a continuum and are interrelated.

VOCABULARY

inherent
conventional
encoder
message
channel
decoder
noise
feedback
continuum
descriptive grammar
prescriptive grammar

formal--informal
standard--non-standard

TO THE TEACHER

Procedures, Sample Questions for Discussions, Sample Introductions, and Sample Summaries are supplied for your guidance. It is assumed that you will adapt these to your own classes and students. Likely answers to discussion questions are indicated in parentheses.

Special attention should be paid to the places in the unit in which the word "ATTENTION" is used. This serves to call your attention to specific kinds of generalizations which might be drawn at that point.

OUTLINE OF THE UNIT

Sample Introduction: Procedure

For the purposes of this introductory lecture only, it is suggested that you present the following material exactly as it is written, even though you will probably not feel comfortable doing so. The manner in which this lecture is to be presented leads directly into some important concepts in the unit; it serves to introduce the major concept, "Language Varies With Approach," as well as important underlying concepts of language study.

Sample Lecture: Read to Class

"Before the similarities and differences between spoken and written language can be profitably discussed, certain basic understandings about the nature of language are necessary. And discussion of language variations must be based upon some knowledge of what language is.

Contrary to the thinking of people who studied language before the 19th century, writing is not the primary form of language. Certainly, in many respects, writing is more permanent than speaking, but this does not mean that speaking was derived from writing. The young child who enters the first grade may have a vocabulary of several thousand words, but he can write only a very few. It should be noted that the normal child speaks rather well

Sample Lecture Continued

by the age of six, but he is often plagued by difficulties in learning how to write well for a much longer time. Speech, then, is the primary form of language.

Since speech is the primary form, it follows that writing must be a secondary form. Writing is an attempt to represent speech. Punctuation provides a good example of this function. Punctuation devices in written sentences tell the reader something about the tone and rhythm that is intended by the writer. For example, in the unpunctuated sentence, "Everyone is going to Chicago," there is no indication of either rhythm or tone. There are many possible variations in the meaning of this sentence, depending upon the way a speaker would say it. This could be a simple declarative sentence, a question, or an exclamatory remark. Every word in the sentence could be given primary stress, changing the meaning each time. Writing must try to represent these variations. The letters and markings used in writing function to represent the sounds, tone, and rhythm of speech; the sounds of speech are combined to form words; words also represent something else, as the map of Minnesota represents the state of Minnesota.

There is no particular reason why the letters in the English alphabet must represent the sounds they do. The

Sample Lecture Continued

English alphabet is an arbitrary set of symbols that writers of English have agreed to use. There is no reason why other symbols could not be used. We might use a set of geometric figures, numbers, arrangements of raised dots as in Braille, and so on. In fact all of these are used in the writing of codes. In reality, language is a code--a code which is agreed upon by all who learn and use the language.

For an example of language coding similar to the English alphabet, one could use the International Phonetic Alphabet, which has more symbols, each symbol representing the different sounds of human speech. In the English language, we use 45 speech sounds that make a difference. We can produce more sounds, but these aren't used in our language. The English alphabet has only 26 letters, so the writer of English must compensate for this difference by using combinations of letters to represent sounds. The IPA, on the other hand, can represent these sounds with individual symbols which eliminate the confusion caused by these combinations in conventional English writing.

Finally it must be understood that language, a code, provides the means by which man communicates and, in fact, thinks. Taking a careful and sensitive look at our culture, one can find few aspects of the culture in which language is not directly or indirectly involved. The

communicative function of language is extremely important. The basic parts of the communication process are as follows:

> A person has something to communicate, so he puts his ideas into coded form (encodes). This coded idea, the message, is received by another person who must decode it before he can respond. The message, of course, must have some channel, some physical means of transmission.

With these aspects of language understood, one can begin to study the variations within a language. This unit will be emphasizing the similarities and differences in language when it is spoken and when it is written.

ATTENTION

The material for this lecture has been taken largely from the seventh grade unit #701, Introduction to the Study of Language. If your students have studied this unit, this lecture should be a general review. If not, you might wish to spend additional time on this material. In this case, it is recommended that you use some of the instructional material from that unit.

In the following class discussion, the purpose is to elicit the students' reactions to the manner of delivery, the obvious reaction being that they probably will realize that you were reading it directly from the unit. You may have some difficulty eliciting this response, since eighth graders may be somewhat hesitant about commenting on your classroom procedures.

Sample Discussion Questions

"The material in the lecture I have just given is important to you if you are to understand the rest of the unit, and we will go back over the important points to make certain that you do understand. First, however, I'd like to ask you for your reactions to the lecture in a slightly different way.

Discuss:

1. Did you notice anything different about this lecture--anything different from the class procedures I usually use?

Sample Discussion Questions Continued

(It sounded like you were reading it)
(You didn't stop to ask us if we understood it)

2. What indications of this difference were there?

   (The language you used)
   (We could see you reading it)

3. Why should the lecture be any different when I read it than when I deliver it spontaneously? Let's list any reasons, and we will develop these reasons throughout the rest of this unit.

ATTENTION

At this point in the unit, it is quite likely that your students will make little more than intuitive responses to the differences between spoken and written language. They will probably answer that the lecture "sounded" different, but it is unlikely that the majority of the students will offer very sophisticated reasons why it should. Part of the purpose, then, is to increase the student's conscious awareness of differences and to give him terms to express his understanding.

Sample Summary and Transition Statement

"You have probably heard several other examples, probably in classroom speeches and public speeches, in which the language used 'sounded written,' and it sounded like the speaker was not talking directly to his audience. Perhaps this sounded artificial or 'phony' to you. Perhaps it sounded like it wouldn't have made much difference to the speaker if he were giving the speech on top of a mountain, with no one to hear him. We usually like to feel as though the speaker is talking directly to us. It gives us the feeling of being in a conversation with the speaker, even though it may be a one-sided conversation. On the other hand, can you think of any situation that almost demands that the speaker carefully write his speech before he delivers it?

Sample Discussion Questions

1. What are some of these situations?

   (Speeches of high officials like the President giving the State of the Union address.)

2. Why do you think it is important for him to have his speech carefully written out?

   (He is held responsible for what he says in public, and speeches like this may contain major policy announcements.)

3. What technological developments have made this even more important today?

   (Mass communication media like television and radio.)

In this discussion, we have noticed some important differences between spoken and written language. We will also look at some of the similarities that we cannot overlook if we are going to understand the ways the English language works. Eventually, we will try to understand how these similarities affect us as we speak, listen, write, and read.

Sample Introduction

Since speech is the primary form of language, our discussion should start there. After we have found the major characteristics of spoken language and the speech situation, we will look at the writing situation. From this comparison we will try to find the INHERENT similarities and differences. Perhaps you haven't heard the word before. Inherent characteristics are those which are <u>natural</u> or <u>firmly fixed</u> in whatever subject we are describing, as

Write INHERENT and CONVENTIONAL on chalkboard.

Sample Introduction Continued

the presence of oxygen is inherent in the kind of air we must breathe to live. This will be important throughout the unit, because we are primarily concerned with finding the basic similarities and differences before moving on to those that are really optional or conventional. Once we have the INHERENT characteristics well understood, it will be easier to understand the CONVENTIONAL characteristics.

Sample Discussion

Keeping in mind, then, that we are looking for the INHERENT characteristics, let's look briefly at the speech situation.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. Why do people use speech?

   (to transmit information)
   (to get people to do things we want them to)
   (to satisfy human needs--self-esteem, protection, creativity)
   (to make social contact with other people--"How do you do")

2. What physical things are involved when you speak to someone?

   (the speaker manipulates his voice to create the desired sounds)
   (the listener hears the coded sounds; whether he understands them is a different matter)
   (the speaker may add other physical action than voice)
   (if the listener is present, he can see this action)

NOTE: The teacher might have some difficulty getting students to accurately respond to these; leading questions will probably be necessary.

3. What kind of problems might interfere with the physical factors in a speech situation?

   (the speaker's voice being inadequate)
   (interfering noises or sounds that would make it hard to hear)
   (if the listener is present, he can see this action)

4. What other factors are involved in the speech situation?

   (the speaker is putting his ideas into a code--ENCODING)
   (the listener tries to DECODE the message)
   (the coded speech sounds STAND FOR or REPRESENT something)

5. What kinds of things might interfere with these?

   (the speaker inadequately encoding his ideas into language)
   (the speaker and the listener do not agree on the code, as when they speak entirely different languages)
   (the listener inaccurately decoding the message)
   (the listener not listening carefully or perhaps thinking about something else)
   (the speaker and the listener have attitudes or prejudices that color their interpretations of the ideas)

6. How does the speaker know whether he is being understood?

   (the listener can ask him questions)
   (he can see puzzled expressions on the listener's face)
   (he can hear his own voice and judge whether it is likely to be understood)

Procedure: Pass out sheet entitled "Communication Model"
Sample Explanation

The sheet I have just handed out to you is called a COMMUNICATION MODEL. We have already discussed many of its parts and labeled them, but let's go over this diagram and explain each part and the way the parts relate to each other. This model is intended as an explanation of communication in general. In other words, we are concerned with all types of communication and the basic parts of any communication situation.

Do you see any reason why the terms ENCODER and DECODER are used? Why can't we use speaker and listener?

(Because these aren't general enough; this wouldn't include other communication situations like writing, telegraphy, sign language, etc.)

ATTENTION

Establish these definitions

1. ENCODER - The source of the communication who has a purpose for communicating. He translates his ideas or purposes into some form of code which can be transmitted.

2. MESSAGE - the coded expression of the encoder's ideas. In other words, the message is what is said, written, etc.

3. CHANNEL - the physical means of transmitting the message from the encoder to the decoder.

4. DECODER - the object or receiver of the message. The decoder receives the message and translates it for his use and understanding.

5. NOISE - any interference in the process of communication. This includes physical sounds, the attitudes of the decoder and encoder, the legibility of writing, confusion in the coding process, etc. Noise may originate in any part of the communication process.

6. FEEDBACK - indication of the success or failure of the communication process that come back to the encoder. Feedback may originate in any part of the process, but it moves in the direction of the encoder.

Sample Discussion

Discuss:

Now that you know the basic parts of any communication process, let's find some examples of communication and find these parts that we have on our model.

Directions: Pass out Worksheet #1.

On this worksheet, describe the essential aspects of four communication situations. Try to find real situations that involve different types of codes. Remember that we have

said that language is a code. Do not list four nearly identical situations.

Note to Teacher:

You might wish to have the students discuss their examples as a class activity. As a further suggestion, the students' understanding of the communication process might be helped by their trying to improve the communication in their examples. Ask the students to find the major weaknesses in their examples and show how these weaknesses might have been avoided.

Sample Summary

Now that we have some understanding of the process of communication, let's look again at the speech situation, and perhaps some of our original questions can be answered better.

What were the major generalizations we made?

Attention

Try to establish these generalizations.

...Speech is the primary form of language.
...Speech is an auditory and visual communication process.
...In addition to the words in speech, the gestures, intonation, stress, etc., that are used by the speaker provide the listener with clues to meaning.
...Spoken words themselves are concrete, but their REFERENTS may be concrete or abstract.
...People speak for a variety of purposes:
  Self-expression
  Transmission of information
  Attempts to satisfy needs.
...The speech situation, when the audience is present, allows the speaker to see indications of his success or failure through feedback from the communication process.
...If the speaker sees that his listeners are confused, he can immediately restate or explain what he has said.
...Speech is a rhythmic flow of sounds, and the listener, having heard what is said, cannot return to it unless he mentally recreates it, missing whatever the speaker says in the meantime.

WORKSHEET # 1 Name _____

Directions: Find four communication situations and describe each of the essential parts of the processes, using the terms in the communication model on Excerpt #1, page 11A. Use actual situations, using different types of codes. The first one is done for you. Keep this worksheet; it will be used later in this unit.

Situation: Teacher giving an assignment to a student in a class.

a. Encoder - teacher

b. Message - an assignment

c. Channel - spoken words

d. Decoder - student

e. Noise - student may not want to do assignment; other students talking; noise in hall.

f. Feedback - teacher sees look on student's face showing lack of interest; hears talking and noise.

Situation:

a. Encoder -

b. Message -

c. Channel -

d. Decoder -

e. Noise -

f. Feedback -

Situation:

a. Encoder -

b. Message -

c. Channel -

d. Decoder -

e. Noise -

f. Feedback

Situation:

a. Encoder -

b. Message -

c. Channel -

d. Decoder -

e. Noise -

f. Feedback -

Situation:

a. Encoder -

b. Message -

c. Channel -

d. Decoder -

e. Noise -

f. Feedback -

Sample Introduction

By now you should understand that the words of speech stand for something else. The terms we use here are: WORD and REFERENT.

Write on chalkboard.

Attention

Establish this distinction carefully.

When I say the word "chalk" I have given you a combination of three sounds. These sounds, arranged that way, represent a word. The WORD then represents something else, which we call a REFERENT, or the thing referred to. The REFERENT of the WORD "chalk" is this white object I'm holding in my hand. It is important to understand that I cannot write on the chalkboard with the word; I write with the referent of the word.

Directions:

Now I'm going to read two sentences to you. I want you to try to find any major differences between them.

Procedure:

(Read both sentences as they sound -- identical)

"I fail to see the meaning of your first paragraph."

"Eye phale to sea the meening uv youre phirst paragraf."

Do you see any difference?

(No, they sounded the same)

Write on chalkboard as they were written.

All right, here's how these two sentences look in writing.

In spoken language they sounded identical, but in writing there are several differences. How does this fit in with our earlier statements that writing represents speech sounds?

(it agrees with it and further shows that writing can represent sounds in a variety of ways. The variant spellings in the second sentence show how different letter combinations can represent different sounds)

Sample Transition

Now that we have a few ideas about the nature of spoken language, let's look at its derived form-writing. Looking over the major characteristics of speech, let's try to see any inherent similarities and differences between written and spoken language.

Pass out Worksheet #2

Directions for Worksheet #2

(Optional Procedure: If the teacher wishes, this could be used as a homework assignment.)

On this worksheet there are two things I want you to do. Part I of the worksheet will be done in class. We are going to look back over our discussions of the nature of spoken language and try to list the most important characteristics. We'll do this together. After we have these written down, we'll look at written language and compare it to spoken, writing the important characteristics of written language on the right side of the worksheet.

For a guide to Part I of this worksheet, see the key in Appendix A.

Attention

Should be stressed.

In Part II of the worksheet,, you have an individual assignment. You are to find an example of written language and show how it represents speech. Any example of written language will do this, but for the most obvious examples, I would suggest that you look at advertisements in magazines and newspapers. For this part of the worksheet, you are to answer three major questions.

1. What speech sounds is the writer trying to represent?
2. What are the inherent problems in representing the sounds?

3. How well does the writer represent speech? You might want to suggest some other ways he might have done it.

Part I WORKSHEET #2 Name _____

Physical Characteristics:

Spoken Language Written Language

Reference:

Spoken Language Written Language

Methods for Showing Meaning:

Spoken Language Written Language

Aspects of Communication:

Spoken Language Written Language

Part II: Either on the back of this sheet, or on a sheet of your own, describe an attempt to represent speech sounds in writing. Answer the following questions in this explanation:

1. What speech sounds is the writer trying to represent?
2. What are the problems involved in representing these sounds?
3. How does the writer try to do this?
4. In your opinion, how well does the writer's attempt represent the sounds? (You might want to suggest some other ways he could have done this.)

Procedure:

This part of the worksheet is intended as an overnight assignment. It should be returned to the students as soon as possible, so the examples they find can be discussed in class. Tell the students to keep this worksheet, as it will be used again.

After these examples have been adequately discussed, the students will apply some of the principles about the nature of written and spoken language to a pair of selections from Mark Twain, one of which involves essentially a spoken style, while the other is written style.

Pass out Excerpts 1, 2, 2.

Students will use these excerpts again later in the unit.

The three selections I have passed out toyou are all written by one man. They are also written about one general subject, but all of them differ from each other. Look for these differences, and try to explain them in terms of our discussion so far in the unit.

Sample Discussion Questions

Discuss:

1. In the selections you have just read, which do you prefer? Why?
2. Which description does the most efficient job of recreating the picture for you as the reader?
3. Which description is the most immediate or real? Why?
4. Which description is written as though it were spoken?
5. What effect does this have on you?
6. Two of the selections are clearly a "written" style. What identifies them as "written?"
7. What advantages can you see that written style has over spoken style?
8. What advantages can you see that spoken style has over written style?

Note: Likely answers to the above questions are not provided since reactions will probably vary considerably. While decisive responses may be quite difficult to elicit, it is important to have students reacting to these differences in the Mark Twain selections even though their reactions may be highly intuitive at this point.

Supplementary Activity: While these selections were chosen for a class discussion, the teacher might wish to assign work with these or similar questions as the focal point.

From Life on the Mississippi by Mark Twain

I had myself called with the four-o'clock watch, mornings, for one cannot see too many summer sunrises on the Mississippi. They are enchanting. First, there is the eloquence of silence; for a deep hush broods everywhere. Next, there is the haunting sense of loneliness; isolation, remoteness from the worry and bustle of the world. The dawn creeps in stealthily; the solid walls of black forest soften to gray, and vast stretches of the river open up and reveal themselves; the water is glass-smooth, gives off spectral little wreaths of white-mist, there is not the faintest breath of wind, nor stir of leaf; the tranquillity is profound and infinitely satisfying. Then a bird pipes up, another follows, and soon the pipings develop into a jubilant riot of music. You see none of the birds; you simply move through an atmosphere of song which seems to sing itself. When the light has become a little stronger, you have one of the fairest and softest pictures imaginable. You have the intense green of the massed and crowded foliage near by; you see it paling shade by shade in front of you; upon the next projecting cape, a mile off or more, the tint has lightened to the tender young green of spring; the cape beyond that one has almost lost color, and the furthest one, miles away under the horizon, sleeps upon the water a mere dim vapor, and hardly separable from the sky above it and about it. And all this stretch of river is a mirror, and you have the shadowy reflections of the leafage and the curving shores and the receding capes pictured in it. Well, that is all beautiful; soft and rich and beautiful; and when the sun gets well up, and distributes a pink flush here and a powder of gold yonder and a purpose haze where it will yield the best effect, you grant that you have seen something that is worth remembering.

From The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, by Mark Twain

Two or three days and nights went by; I reckon I might say they swum by, they slid along so quiet and smooth and lovely. Here is the way we put in the time. It was a monstrous big river down there--sometimes a mile and half wide; we run nights, and laid up and hid day-times; soon as night was most gone we stopped navigating and tied up--nearly always in the dead water under a towhead; and then cut young cottonwoods and willows, and hid the raft with them. Then we set out the lines. Next we slid into the river and had a swim, so as to freshen up and coof off; then we set down on the sandy bottom where the water was about knee-deep, and watched the daylight come. Not a sound anywheres--perfectly still--just like the whole world was asleep, only sometimes the bullfrogs a-cluttering, maybe. The first thing to see, looking away over the water, was a kind of dull line--that was the woods on t'other side; you couldn't make nothing else out; then a pale place in the sky; then more paleness spreading around; then the river softened up away off, and warn't black any more, but gray; you could see little dark spots drifting along ever so far away--trading-scows, and such things; and long black streaks--rafts; sometimes you could hear a sweep screaking; or jumbled-up voices, it was so still, and sounds come so far; and by and by you could see a streak on the water which you know by the look of the streak that there's a snag there in a swift current which breaks on it and makes that streak look that way; and you see the mist curl up off of the water, and the east reddens up, and the river, and you make out a log cabin in the edge of the woods, away on the bank on t'other side of the river, being a woodyard, likely and piled by them chests so you can throw a dog through it anywheres; then the nice breeze springs up, and comes fanning you from over there, so cool and fresh and sweet to smell on account of the woods and the flowers; but sometimes not that way, because they've left dead fish laying around, gars and such, and they do get pretty rank; and next you've got the full day, and everything smiling in the sun, and the song-birds just going it!

From The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, by Mark Twain

It was the cool gray dawn, and there was a delicious sense of repose and peace in the deep pervading calm and silence of the woods. Not a leaf stirred; not a sound obtruded upon Nature's meditation. Beaded dewdrops stood upon the leaves and grasses. A while layer of ashes covered the fire, and a thing blue breath of smoke rose straight into the air.

Now, far away in the woods a bird called; another answered; presently the hammering of a woodpecker was heard. Gradually the cool dim gray of the morning whitened, and as gradually sounds multiplied and life manifested itself. The marvel of Nature shaking off sleep and going to work unfolded itself to the musing boy. A little green worm came crawling over a dewy leaf, lifting two-thirds of his body in the air from time to time and "sniffing around," then proceeding again--for he was measuring, Tom said; and when the worm approached him, of its own accord, he sat still as a stone, with his hopes rising and falling by turns, as the creature came toward him or seemed inclined to go elsewhere; and when at last it considered a painful moment with its curved body in the air and then came decisively down upon Tom's leg and began a journey over him, his whole heart was glad--for that meant that he was going to have a new suit of clothes--without the shadow of a doubt a guady piratical uniform. Now a procession of ants appeared, from nowhere in particular, and went about their labors; one struggled manfully by with a dead spider five times as big as itself in its arms, and lugged it straight up a tree trunk. A brown spotted lady-bug climbed the dizzy height of a grass-blade and Tom bent down close to it and said, "Lady-bug, lady-bug, fly away home, your house is on fire, your children's alone," and she took wing and went off to see about it--which did not surprise the boy, for he knew of old that this insect was credulous about conflagrations, and he had practised upon its simplicity more than once. A tumblebug came next, heaving sturdily at its ball, and Tom touched the creature, to see it shut its legs against its body and pretend to be dead. The birds were fairly rioting by this time. A catbird, the Northern mocker, lit in a tree over Tom's head, and trilled out her imitations of her neighbors in a rapture of enjoyment; then a shrill jay swept down, a flash of blue flame, and stepped on a twig almost within the boy's reach, cocked his head to one side and eyed the strangers with a consuming curiosity; a gray squirrel and a big fellow of the "fox" kind came scurrying along, sitting up at intervals to inspect and chatter at the boys, for the wild things had probably never seen a human being before and scarcely knew whether to be afraid or not. All Nature was wide awake and stirring, now; long lances of sunlight pierced down through the dense foliage far and near, and a few butterflies came fluttering upon the scene.

Sample Introduction

Up to this point, we have been discussing language in rather general terms. We have been looking at language as if it were suspended somewhere in space. We have tried to be objective, and with this subject, that is sometimes rather difficult. Instead of seeing language as being something "detached" from us, wemight, as the nuclear physicist Neils Bohr suggests, see ourselves as being suspended in language. Perhaps it seems difficult to see it in this way, but what he meant was that Language is the major influence on the way we think, the things we do, as well as the things we say. To use another example from physics, one of the most difficult problems faced by Albert Einstein when he was working on the theory of relativity was breaking free from the bonds of language. In fact, the more we look at any problem involving thought and knowledge, language is intimately involved. Obviously we can't hope to look at all these at this time. You and I will spend the rest of our lives in the process.

Let it suffice to say now that our language and our culture are closely related. All that we know about the world is passed on to the next generations by language. It is through language that the business of culture goes on. I doubt that we could find any aspect of modern American culture that is not directly influenced by language. Our culture is enormously complicated; this should be

Sample Introduction Continued

obvious. It would be rather unreasonable to ask an inflexible, static language to do all the complex jobs that must be done. Only a quick glance at language will show us that it varies greatly. Different situations demand variations in the language used in the situations. We have already seen that language varies with the two basic approaches--writing and speaking, but within these approaches, there are more specific variations.

Write on chalkboard.

You remember that we were primarily concerned with INHERENT similarities and differences between speaking and writing. We still want to keep this in mind; we want to see if these other variations will be INHERENT or CONVENTIONAL.

Sample Discussion

Let's set up an imaginary situation. Suppose you were expelled from this English class for misbehavior. The word travels quickly around the school, and several people ask you about it. How would you explain the situation to the following people?

1. your best friend in the eighth grade
2. your counselor
3. the principal
4. your parents
5. your minister
6. in a written report to be placed in school files

Suggested Activities

Students will probably demonstrate an intuitive awareness of using language differently in these situations. It is important that students realize that they do have this intuitive awareness and that it is quite normal as learned, almost habitual behavior. There are some obvious possibilities for activities related to this discussion.

1. Students respond orally to the situation.

2. Students writing the various explanations. (There will be some difficulty here, as students will probably change the language they would use in the spoken situation when they try to put it into writing. This could be used as a good illustration of spoken-written differences.)

3. Students observing the responses of others to similar situations.

Optional Discussions and Activities

We can probably find several other good examples of varieties or levels of usage in practical situations. One that comes to mind is the invitation to a party.

See note on page 2 of the unit about the sequence of the following materials.

1. Let's assume you are on a committee in charge of invitations to a class party. How would you:

   a. Invite your best friend when you see him in the hall?

   b. Write invitiations to faculty or PTA members who are being asked to chaperone?

2. Suppose you are the foreman of a group of long-shoremen. Which of the following would be more successful? Why?

   a. "Gentlemen, I should like your expert assistance in conveying this parcel of merchandise from the deck of this stately sea-going craft to the surface of this loading area."

   b. "Hey, you! Move that #*@& crate and put it there."

When we use the terms FORMAL and INFORMAL in this unit, we are talking both about situations and the language that is used in these situations. Certainly we are going to run into a few problems when we label certain situations formal or informal, because there are exceptions and there are varying degrees of formality. For now, we will try to find situations that we would <u>probably</u> or <u>usually</u> classify as formal or informal.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the situations we would probably call "formal?"

   (sometimes in school, meeting strangers, church, graduation exercises, meetings of law making bodies, parliamentary procedure)

2. Why do we consider these occasions formal?
   (solemnity, importance, need for careful wording, impersonal)

3. Then can you name some informal situations?

   (conversations with friends, family, sometimes school activities)

4. How do these differ from formal situations?

   (More personal, more familiar, less need for careful conduct, may not have as much universal importance)

Sample Summary

As we have been talking, you may have noticed that we tended to use the terms "more" and "less" quite frequently. I said earlier that we should try to find situations that would <u>probably</u> be formal or informal. This means that we have been trying to avoid saying that a situation would ALWAYS be either completely formal or completely informal. When we make value judgments like this, perhaps it would help to view the <u>degrees</u> of formality or informality on a line scale. We call this kind of scale a <u>CONTINUUM</u>. Let's construct a continuum for "good" and "bad."

Write <u>Continuum</u> on Board.

Teacher should draw these on chalkboard.

GOOD ——— NEUTRAL ——— BAD

If we are going to evaluate the performance of the football team as "good," we might ask, "To what are we comparing it?" We might say that this year's team (A)

is better than last year's (B) but not as good as the other teams in the conference this year (C). On the continuum, this would look like this:

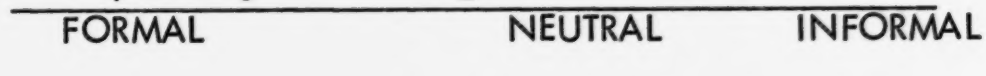
In other words, the continuum shows RELATIVE values. This allows us to show how one "formal" situation can be more "formal" than another "formal" situation.

Sample Discussion

Let's try an example. How would you show the degrees of formality of the following occasions?

1. The Inauguration of the President of the United States.
2. A PTA meeting in this school or a school club meeting.
3. A high school graduation ceremony.

Draw on board.



These situations weren't particularly difficult to judge; you could at least show a relative formality.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. What would happen if I asked you to assign number values to the formality of these situations, those values accurately representing the amount of formality in each situation? For instance, this might lead to an answer like, "#1 is 98% formal, #2 is 55% formal, and #3 is 80% formal." Would you be willing to accept this kind of analysis? Why or why not?

   (No. These wouldn't be accurate measures. Formality can't be counted like potatoes in a sack.)

Sample Summary Statement

Perhaps this seems like an obvious point to most of you, but it's important enough to talk about for a minute. When we talk about the formality of a situation in which language

Sample Summary Statement Continued

is to be used, we must recognize that we aren't dealing with a measurable object. When we make judgments about language situations, we are forced to deal with approximations and tendencies, and we usually couch these in relative terms. Granted, the inauguration of a President of the United States is a formal occasion, but we have no way of definitely saying that it possesses an exact degree of formality. Furthermore, such a measure would probably be of little use to us anyway. Suppose you could measure the formality of a speaking situation with scientific accuracy. How, then, would you apply this to your own speaking in that situation? Suppose you could say that the situation is 93% formal; how would you choose your language use to make it 93% formal? What would be the difference between the 93% formal language and some 89% formal language? The point is simply that the range of informality or formality in language is not exact enough or definite enough to make such manipulations. The speaker or the writer approximates the degree of formality that he thinks exists in the situation. If he's close enough, the speech or paper seems appropriate. If he's too far off the mark, parts of the speech or paper will seem inappropriate for the situation.

Sample Summary Statement
Continued

At this point, you might have a question something like this: "If there isn't anything more definite to work from, how can teachers of English expect students to learn how to adapt language to the formality of situations?"

I'd say that this is a reasonable question, and you will be able to answer it at least partially. I said before that you have to work with approximations. Obviously, you need the ability to determine degree of formality with adequate accuracy. This, essentially, is something for which I can't give you a formula. It's more a matter of experience and practice. Regarding the manipulation of language to suit situations, you have enough information now to at least say that any generalizations we make about formality and language must be rather carefully qualified statements.

By looking at some examples, I think you will be able to find some cautious generalizations. Earlier in the unit, you read three passages written by Mark Twain. Our discussions at that time were fairly general. Now you'll be reading those passages again with some more definite, more specific things to analyze. After reading these passages, you will be working on a worksheet. For that assignment, you will be examining the vocabulary, the sentence construction, and the tone of the person telling the story. You are to be especially concerned with finding examples that suggest and illustrate formal and informal language. The directions are

on the worksheet. While it is a secondary matter, you might keep our earlier discussions in mind. We made some judgments about the effectiveness of these three passages. Now you might try to find more specifically what made the most effective passage so effective. This, of course, is going to be a matter of opinion; I'm not interested in finding the ultimate answer to this.

Distribute Worksheet #3.
Sample Discussion: Students should discuss Worksheet #3 and the examples found. See Key in Appendix A. This discussion illustrates the kinds of generalizations which might result from the discussion of the worksheet.

First, we'll look at vocabulary. Are the words used in formal situations likely to be different in any way?

List on chalkboard as student response is elicited.

INFORMAL	FORMAL
(short, familiar words)	(longer, less familiar words)
(perhaps some slang)	(avoids slang)
(personal reference)	(general, less personal)

Now let's look at the way words are put together into longer units--sentences. This process is called <u>syntax</u>. How would sentences differ?

INFORMAL	FORMAL
(shorter sentences)	(longer sentences)
(simpler constructions)	(more complex)
(possibly fragmented, incomplete)	(emphasis complete, carefully constructed sentences)
	(heavier use of modifiers and qualifiers)

Now let's step back to look at the generalizations we've just made. Remember that we are stressing <u>inherent</u> characteristics. Perhaps the best way to do this is to ask questions about exceptions to our generalizations and try to find examples of exceptions.

WORKSHEET #3

Directions: Read the three passages written by Mark Twain. In general, you are to determine the relative formality of the three passages. More specifically, you are to look at the vocabulary, the sentence construction, and the tone of the narrator, trying to find specific examples that allow the reader to make the general claims, "It is formal. It is informal."

Part One - Vocabulary

Make a list of words under the title of each passage. Find words that illustrate formality or informality. You may list either formal or informal words, but try to find words that are characteristic of the passage from which you take them. After you have finished the list, answer the question at the bottom of the page.

Life on the Mississippi	Tom Sawyer	Huckleberry Finn

Question: Based upon the vocabulary of the three passages, how would you label each--formal or informal? (You may add a qualifying statement if you don't feel completely comfortable in labeling any of these in such a definite "either-or" manner.)

Worksheet #3 (Continued)

Part Two - Sentence Construction

Under each title, write down three sentences that are characteristic of the passage. Look for such characteristics as completeness, complexity, length, and the use of modification.

Life on the Mississippi:

1.

2.

3.

Tom Sawyer:

1.

2.

3.

Huckleberry Finn:

1.

2.

3.

Part Three - Tone of the Narrator

For each passage, write a brief statement which summarizes the formality or informality of the person who is telling the story. To support your summary, draw examples from the passage.

Life on the Mississippi:

Tom Sawyer:

Huckleberry Finn:

Sample Discussion Questions

Teacher may wish to elicit longer answers.

1. Are all formal situations solemn? (No)
2. Are all informal situations concerned with family and friends? (No)
3. Do all formal situations involve longer sentences or more difficult words? (No)
4. Is it possible to have complex, longer sentences in an informal situation? (Yes)
5. Can a speaker or writer use informal language in a formal situation? (Yes)
6. For what reasons would he do this? (Rhetorical effect)

Sample Summary

It seems that we have been able to find a number of exceptions for the generalizations we have made earlier. This makes it quite obvious that the scale or continuum is necessary to us. What, if anything, can we say about the INHERENT distinctions between formal and informal situations?

(It is inherent that we judge informality and formality in degrees rather than by absolute differences.)

ATTENTION

Several leading questions may be necessary to bring out this generalization.

Can we find any INHERENT similarities?

(Both formal and informal situations demand highly CONVENTIONAL language. The conventions may differ greatly, but both situations demand language that is highly conventional.)

Sample Discussion

Assuming that we are talking about conventions or accepted practices when the distinctions are drawn between formal and informal, we should try to find reasons behind these conventions. You have probably heard the statement that man is a social animal --that he tends to group

Sample Discussion Continued

together with other men. Let's take the example of a group of small boys who have a secret club. One of the first things they will probably do is find some way of identifying each other, preferably some way that will not allow anyone else to be identified with their group. Usually this means that they will find some code or password that only their members will know.

Discuss:

1. If somebody does not know the password, can he be a member of the club?

   (No, probably not)

2. If somebody does know the password, can he be a member?

   (possibly, there could be exceptions)

3. What are these exceptions?

   (someone may have found out what the password is)
   (armies frequently use passwords, but these must be changed occasionally)

ATTENTION
The teacher should emphasize the fact that the willingness and ability to use conventions is only a part of the membership requirements. It is not a guarantee in all cases. For instance, students who wear the accepted clothing of the status clique in the school are not guaranteed membership on the basis of clothes alone.

The same is true with language. Often, even though you may not realize it, your language, the way you speak and write it, may provide clues to someone who tries to identify you. Certain groups and certain situations involve fairly well-known conventions that may be part of the membership requirements. If you belong to the group, chances are that you will adhere to these accepted practices. If you don't know or use the conventions, there might be some hesitancy to allow you the membership. If you do know the

conventions and make practical use out of them, this may be a part of achieving membership, but there could be exceptions here. If a shabbily-dressed man with a three-day beard develops the dialect of Eastern high scoiety, will he be able to get into a party in the wealthy district of Boston? No, there are other standards besides the language that may be important.

We said earlier in this discussion that the conventions may be broken by a writer or speaker for special effect. Can you think of any good reasons for this?

(The writer or speaker might be trying to characterize someone)
(In some situations the informal style and informal language might provide an effective contrast to someone who has been <u>too</u> formal and correct.)

If the writer or speaker breaks these rules, can we assume that he doesn't know about them? (No) If we can't assume this, we must assume that he knows he is breaking them, and, if he is sensitive to them, he is doing so for a specific purpose. Later in this unit, we will be discussing <u>your</u> role in dealing with these conventions.

Sample Transition

Always keeping in mind the dangers of overgeneralizations and the need to consider language situations as having tendencies rather than absolute boundaries, let's see how the formal and informal situation affect the spoken and written approaches.

PROCEDURE:
Refer to Worksheet #1

I asked you to keep Worksheet #1 for a later discussion, and we will use it now. Look over the distinctions between spoken and written language. Now we are going to apply what we have said about formal and informal situations to the approaches of speaking and writing, and we will try to find how these situations affect these approaches.

Sample Discussion Questions

Discuss:

1. Can you give me some examples of INFORMAL SPEAKING situations?

   (discussions with friends at school, at parties, on the phone)
   (everyday family situations)
   (some classroom discussions)

2. Given these situations, what conclusions can we find about the tendencies of the language you would use?

   (heavy use of personal referents--I, you, he)
   (use of vocabulary familiar to speaker and audience; this probably includes some slang, and special terms)
   (fragmented, characterized by interruptions, interjections)
   (direct "give and take" between speaker and audience)
   (probably not carefully planned in advance)
   (less concern for "um" and "ah")

3. How about some FORMAL SPEAKING situations? Can you think of any of these?

   (speaking to an assembly, perhaps speaking to the principal)
   (speeches that carry importance, with several people involved)
   (speeches that will become a part of the public record and will be quoted as a matter of policy, etc.)
   (speaking in any situation that places formal demands)
   (avoidance of "um, uh" time consumers)

4. How will the language be adapted to fit these occasions

(more carefully planned)
(probably less personal, with the probable exception of the broadly aimed "you")
(quite probably may actually be written, at least in expanded outline form)
(considerably more care taken to limit meanings of words, to avoid misunderstanding)

NOTE: If students seem to respond well to these distinctions, the teacher can take many of them much further. For example, within one press conference the president may use a variety of these, depending upon the importance of the issue. The president might also take advantage of an informal situation to make major addresses. The press frequently will change an informal statement by an important public figure, made in an informal manner, into a formal statement. Many examples of this are usually available.

PROCEDURE:
Briefly review the discussion of formal and informal spoken language.

Discuss:

What general conclusions can we draw from this discussion? One way of doing this might be to look at the similarities which we haven't talked about yet. After we see some similarities, maybe some of the most important differences will become obvious.

The teacher might wish to ask the students for these. Some leading will probably be needed.

Similarities: Formal and informal speech

1. In both cases, the audience both sees and hears the speaker.
2. In both cases, the speaker manipulates voice and gesture to provide added dimension in meaning.
3. In both cases, the speaker may use repetitions to clearly establish important matters.
4. Since the advent of mass communication, in both cases, the speaker may not actually see his audience.
5. When the speaker can see his audience, in both cases, he can observe feedback and make immediate adjustment
6. In both cases, the speaker can make adjustments to compensate for interference.

Differences: Formal and informal speech

1. In formal speech situations, the speaker is likely to use a style which tends to resemble written style.
2. In informal speaking, the style is usually more conversational.
3. In informal situations, there is likely to be more actual interaction between speaker and listener. The listener will generally be more likely to interrupt with questions and comments.
4. Informal speaking, generally, will tend to be more personal.

Sample Discussion Questions

Discuss:

1. Now let's look at the other approach--writing. Can you give me some examples of INFORMAL WRITING situations?

   (personal notes and letters)

2. What would be the likely characteristics of the language in personal notes and letters?

   (as the situation demands, the language will be more personal)
   (formal usage conventions not strictly followed)
   (direct attempt to imitate informal spoken language, especially seen as underlining, use of quotation marks, use of additional end punctuation)
   (usually will reflect more limited concerns than formal writing; more likely to deal with everyday matters)
   (organization is likely to be loose--the progression of thought tends to be conversational)

3. Now let's find some FORMAL WRITING situations.

   (students might reasonably conclude that all situations except those mentioned in informal writing are, in varying degrees, formal in nature)
   (business letters, letters of application)
   (school papers)
   (published works--articles, fiction)

4. What would be the language characteristics in these situations?

   (adherence to, or conscious divergence from, formal conventions)
   (careful organization)

(careful use of words to avoid misunderstanding)
(some conversational aspects of informal speech and writing, but not as personal)
(complete sentences, unfragmented)

NOTE: At this point, the teacher might wish to discuss the trends in formal writing toward a conversational style. Students should try to find those aspects of conversational language use that can be taken into formal writing.

As we did with the formal and informal speaking situations and their accompanying language characteristics, let's look at the important similarities and differences of formal and informal writing.

Discuss:

SIMILARITIES

1. Both situations involve the representation of speech sounds.

2. In addition, both situations tend to represent the speech sounds in related situations. Formal writing represents formal speaking more than informal speaking, and conversely, informal writing has many of the same characteristics of informal speaking.

3. In both cases, writing is hampered by being unable to accurately represent all the aspects of the speech situation. (The writer cannot easily represent tone and gesture.) This of course should be clarified somewhat. When we speak of writing here, we are talking about our 26 figure alphabet. A phonetic system comes closer to accurate representation, but it is also unable to represent the gestures that may play a central role in communicating meaning.

4. In both situations, the reader (or encoder, of the students are familiar with the terms of the communication model) is not in direct contact with the writer. The writer does not have any indication of feedback when he is writing; the writing process, however, does involve imagined feedback. The writer tries to imagine the reaction of his reader to the language and tries to manipulate the language in the manner which is most likely to elicit the desired response.

ATTENTION
Try to elicit these generalizations.

ATTENTION
It should be quite easy to show students how they do this in their writing.

The teacher might wish to do this inductively by asking the students to show the kinds of comments their English teacher is most likely to put on the papers they write.

DIFFERENCES

1. Informal writing allows considerably more latitude in the ways the writer tries to represent speech sounds. (In an informal note, we frequently see words emphasized by being underlined several times, and this practice is often quite acceptable to the readers.)

2. Informal writing allows fragmented, incomplete thoughts, structured rather loosely, while formal writing is more likely to demand closely constructed, complete sentences.

3. When formal writing does not follow the conventions, there is a purpose--an intended effect; the writer is still operating within a formal framework. (Refer to the stream of consciousness style in "The Sound and the Fury")

NOTE: Specific conventions may be taught at another time. It is not the purpose of this unit to treat them specifically.

4. Formal writing ascribes to standards and conventions that are usually clearly defined. As an example, the student might look at various style sheets to see how they prescribe certain conventions.

ATTENTION

Try to draw this generalization from the discussion.

I'd like you to recall something we talked about before discussing the specific dimensions of situation. You will remember that we are interested in:

1. Conventional characteristics--those which are dependent on accepted practice or custom.
2. Inherent characteristics--those which are basic or natural in the approach.

Looking back over the two summaries of the formal-informal spoken language and the formal-informal written language, try to decide which characteristics are inherent and which are conventional.

(THE SIMILARITIES TEND TO BE INHERENT. THE DIFFERENCES TEND TO BE CONVENTIONAL.)

This is an important conclusion. As speakers and writers, we can make a number of related generalizations from this.

(We can learn the inherent aspects of the two approache
(We can apply this body of understanding to more specifi
cases, cases which lead to changes, adaptations of
usage rules.)
(An understanding of this basic material will help us
understand the possible combinations that might occur.)

Suggested Activities:

1. Students create samples of language which would be appropriate to given circumstances.
2. Students create varying samples of some message in different situations.
3. Reversing the order, assuming that we can analyze written or spoken discourse and find the situations for which it is written.
4. Students find or create examples of inappropriate language for the situation. There are many examples of this on television and in books. In fact, this is a rather stock routine.

Directions:

Have students read the selection from Robert Penn Warren's novel All the King's Men pp. 96-100. (N. Y.: Modern Library, 1953,) beginning with "The candidate could still stand" and ending with "But I'm getting out now." Note that we have been discussing the approaches to language--writing and speaking, and that we have added the formal and informal situations. Ask students to see how the selection illustrates some of the things we have fun talking about so far.

Sample Discussion Questions for selection from All the King's Men

Discuss:

1. What is the situation?
   (campaign speech)
2. Would we usually call this formal or informal?
   (somewhat formal)
3. Why does Willie decide not to read the manuscript of his speech? Earlier in the book, it is shown that he spent a considerable amount of time rehearsing it.
   (his ideas changed, for one thing)
   (he wanted to talk directly to his audience)
4. Who were the people in his audience?
   (lower class people--"hicks" as he called them)

5. Can you find any statements that would be inappropriate in a strictly formal situation?

   (there are several possibilities for this)

6. Can you imagine any of the effects of this speech?

Sample Transition and Introduction

When we move into the dimension of STANDARD-NONSTANDARD we are talking about something we have been hinting throughout the discussion of FORMAL-INFORMAL. We concluded that formal speech and writing both tend to have more obviously stated conventions and standards. Our discussions in this unit about standard and nonstandard English will be quite general. Throughout junior high, senior high, and perhaps college, you will be learning more about the standard and non-standard language choices. For our purposes here, we are only concerned with the general effect this dimension can have on the approaches of speaking and writing. One might look at almost any English text or dictionary and find standards of usage. People have consistently attempted to find and/or prescribe the "correct" usage. We can look closely at our language or any other, assuming that we can understand it, and find that certain rules are usually followed by the speakers and writers of language. We could call this a descriptive grammar. When people try to set the standards for language use, we say that they have written a prescriptive grammar. Those who make the standards try to

Sample Transition and Introduction Continued

the "correct" forms. These are matters of usage. When, in other units, you will study the history of the English language, it will become obvious to you that the rules must not be absolute; they have changed so many times.

We have rules of etiquette in language usage. These are similar to rules of etiquette for social situations. Large numbers of etiquette books show the teenager, for instance, how to act in a variety of situations. It seems quite reasonable, since language is one of our most social behaviors, that people have taken it upon themselves to provide guides to correctness.

One of the first things you will notice about any books on etiquette is that they tend to differ on specific matters. The same is true of language etiquette. Almost all prescriptive grammars differ somewhat on specific matters. You will be able to see this best, perhaps, by comparing textbooks used in English classes in the past with those used at the present time. Our tastes change with time and place. The tastes of different writers change. All these have some influence on the rules or standards.

Our primary interest is the way in which the approach to language relates to these dimensions.

1. First, remembering the distinctions drawn in previous discussions, can you think of any people who would probably be involved in the setting of language standards?

   (educated people generally)

2. If we, as speakers and writers adapt our language to situations, we must have some rules or principles in mind, even though these may be quite vague and not well understood. Why do we follow the rules that someone else has set down? Do you remember the example of the boys in their secret club? How does this relate to that example? Are there any major differences?

   (Yes, the language codes or "passwords" are available to all who would like to learn them.)

Dramatizations possible here:

3. In other words, we use the rules or conventions because we want to be a member. Usually we talk about this in terms of striving for a higher position --an improvement over one's present status. Can you think of any situation in which this would be reversed?

   (the adult who tries to become friends with the teenager by using the language of the teenager)
   (the adult who tries to talk to a very young child and uses baby talk)

4. How about the opposite? When would a person probably try to use higher language conventions?

   (when talking to someone who probably expects that the rules will be followed)

We said earlier that "educated people" are involved in the setting of language standards. Generally we could say that the educated person probably uses language that he thinks is appropriate for one of his social and educational standing. Similarly, it is this group that provides the people who set the language rules, or at least try to set them. We'll see some obvious reasons for this when we talk about non-standard usage.

5. How would you define non-standard usage? Who would use it? When would they be likely to use it? Is it always wrong? Given the type of people to which we generally attribute non-standard usage, can you find any reasons why these people do not set the standards at least not consistently?

Discussion Continued

(Because these are the people least likely to be concerned with these matters, and certainly the least likely to write textbooks about them. It could be shown, though, that on the local level, these people might indeed set unwritten standards. They might, for instance, tend to view anyone who spoke differently with a great deal of suspicion and even hostility. They might use the standards they set as a means of identification. e.g., the northerner in the South.)

6. What conclusions can we draw about the use of non-standard English in the various approaches and situations we have discussed in this unit?

Teacher may wish to write these answers on chalkboard as they are elicited.

(1. Non-standard is frequently used, in small amounts, by most speakers.
2. By writers, it is used only for effect--for characterization.
3. Writing non-fiction is usually severely restricted against the use of non-standard.
4. The only time non-standard may be appropriate for anyone who wishes not to be stereotyped by his language, and then can be used only in small amounts, is informal speaking.
5. In formal speaking and writing, non-standard usage is to be avoided, unless it is used for effect.
6. The speaker or writer who obviously does not know and cannot handle the standard forms will probably be categorized as uneducated by the majority of the people who hear or read him.
7. Standards of usage are set by "the educated speakers and writers.")

Procedure: Have students read the selection from William Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury, (New York: Vintage Books), 1956. Paragraph 1, p. 201.

You will immediately notice that there is no punctuation in this passage. This is the way it is intended. Here we have a case where, in an essentially formal situation, the writer does not follow the rules. Read this passage and think about the effect of this writing style.

NOTE TO TEACHER: Teachers will wish to read the selection several times to acquire "stream-of consciousness" effect.

PROCEDURE: After students have read the Faulkner selection, the teacher should read it aloud to them.

Sample Discussion Questions for the selection from The Sound and the Fury

Now you have both read and heard this selection.

1. Does the writer know the rules of punctuation?

   (probably)

2. What function does punctuation generally serve?

   (Shows speech rhythm)

3. What kind of rhythm is shown by this selection then?

   (rambling, monotonous)

4. What is the effect of this rhythm?

   (it seems to be like drifting thought)

Eighth graders may have some difficulty with this.

This is known as "stream-of-consciousness" style. Faulkner uses it quite frequently in his books to show the thought patterns of his characters. Would the same effect be achieved if this were punctuated? Let's go through this passage and fill in punctuation.

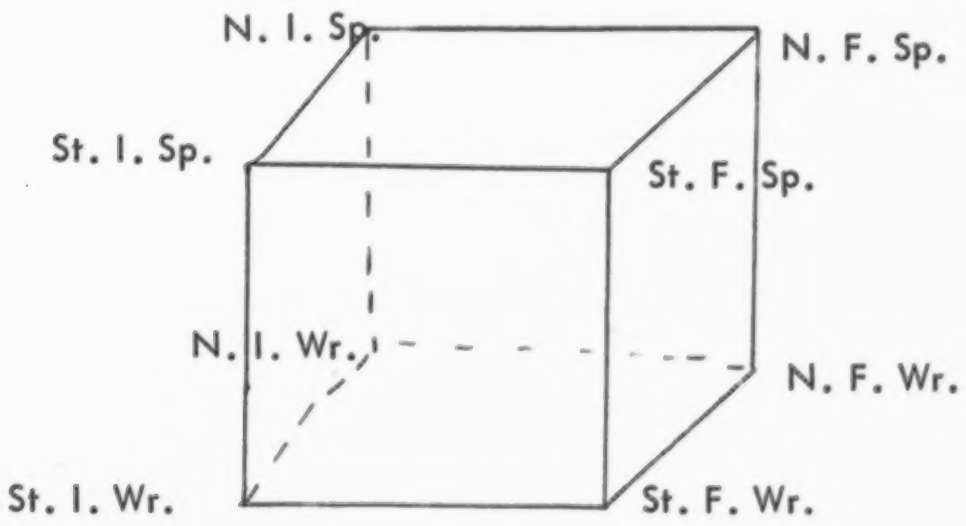
PROCEDURE:

Read the punctuated passage to class to show the different rhythm.

Lecture-Summary

We have discussed language approach in terms of three major dimensions. The dimensions, we have seen, are not polar, that is, if we use a line scale to represent the dimensions, all the cases are not at opposite, absolute ends of the scale. In fact, we found that situations should be placed along this line, in positions that show their relationships to each other. Perhaps the best way we can picture all the dimensions of spoken-written, formal-informal, and standard-non-standard language is to use a three-dimensional model.

I=Informal
F=Formal
St. =Standard
N=Non-standard
SP=Spoken
Wr=Written



FOR THE TEACHER:

Construct the model and explain what each part represents. Explain that the language is to be shown within the cube, with tendency shown by proximity to appropriate dimensions on the three-dimensional continuum. Try several examples, with students trying to place the language in the appropriate place and justify the placement. As the conclusion of the unit, suggest that the model is stagnant as it stands. There are many more influences that should be considered in a complete or nearly complete model. The model is moved through space and time, it is moved by people of both sexes with variant motivations for using the language, and in a related manner, the purpose influences the kind of language used.

SUPPLEMENTARY UNIT ACTIVITIES

1. Rewrite the following conversation in informal English:

   "I am situated in a most unenviable situation," he said.
   "What is your difficulty?" asked his sister.
   "Hazard a guess."
   "I will wage that you have run your horse so hard you have had to destroy him."
   "No, the occurrence is of a far more serious nature than that."
   "You have again been suspended from classes."
   "No, it is even worse than that."
   "Oh, William, you have not been rash enough to chastise anyone with your horsewhip or put a bullet into someone, have you?"
   "No, I have been expelled from the academy," he said sadly.

2. Students keep a record of the varieties of English they hear in a day.

3. Further analyses of communication situations, using the communication model.

4. Group discussions: Students break into small groups of four or five. The following question is given as the group assignment:

   "As students in the junior high school, how can we use this material in our writing for school assignments; how much spoken, informal, and non-standard style can or should the student use in writing assignments?"

   Discussion groups will write a report on this question. As an optional activity, the groups could present this report to the class or to another class, but it should be stressed that several reports on the same subject given to the same class would not prove very exciting.

5. Have students examine comic strips to find out more about the problems of transferring speech to writing. More specific examples of questions to have students explore can be found in Jean Malmstrom's Language in Society (New York: Hayden Book Co.), 1965, p. 30.

6. Students draw from books read prior to or during this unit. Special attention is given to the ways in which authors manipulate language to reflect approach or situation. Students can choose any of the dimensions of spoken-written, formal-informal, and standard-non-standard, or a combination of more than one. Show by examples whether a particular scene from the book is formal or informal. Why does the author set it up in this way? What would happen if it were the opposite? Rewrite part of the scene, changing it from informal to formal (or formal to informal). What is the result? Is it consistent with the story being told? How would you classify the language of the characters in the book? On what grounds would you make this classification? Show examples. Are there any examples in which a character changes his language to suit a situation? What kinds of changes are made? Does the language of the character tell you anything about the character? How is this accomplished by the author?

Appendix A Key to WORKSHEET #2

Part I

	SPOKEN LANGUAGE	WRITTEN LANGUAGE
Physical Characteristics:	Produced and perceived speech sounds operating as meaningful symbols of referents. Flexible range of stress, pitch, and juncture.	Visual, graphic symbols
Reference:	Speech symbols refer to things.	Graphic symbols refer to speech sounds which refer to things.
Methods for Showing Meaning:	Direct reference Intonation, volume, etc. Gesture	Reference to speech sounds Occasionally the graphic symbols have meaning without actual reference to speech sounds. Highly limited in the ability to show emphasis, intonation (italics, underlining, etc.)
Aspects of Communication:	Audience hears intonation, etc. Speaker often visable to audience. Often immediate feedback possible. In direct communication situations in which speaker and audience are both present, audience can ask questions of the speaker or give him other types of feedback.	Audience cannot hear the writer. No active give and take between writer and reader. Feedback, if any, is delayed. Audience can only see the text and depends on conventions to understand intended meaning.

Appendix A

Key to WORKSHEET #3

Part One - Vocabulary

Life on the Mississippi	Tom Sawyer	Huckleberry Finn
"enchanting	"delicious	"reckon
eloquence	repose	swum
broods	pervading	quiet and smooth and lovely
haunts	obtruded	monstrous big
loneliness	meditation	run nights
isolation	multiplied	laid up
remoteness	manifested	most gone
stealthily	musing	towhead
tranquility	accord	slid into the river
profound	inclined	freshen up
infinitely	decisively	cool off
satisfying	gaudy	knee-deep
jubilant	piratical	anywheres
atmosphere	procession	a-cluttering
imaginable	manfully	looking away over the water
foliage	credulous	dull line
projecting	conglagrations	pale place
separable	rapture	softened up
reflections	consuming	t'other
leafage	scurrying	trading-scows
receding"	lances	jumbled-up
	foliage"	them cheats
		pretty rank"

Students' answers to the question on formality will vary somewhat, especially in their estimations of the formality of Life on the Mississippi and Tom Sawyer. These two passages are quite similar in terms of formality, but the last sentence in the passage from Life does switch to a more conversational tone. The important difference for students to recognize is between these two and the passage from Huck Finn. The essential differences should be obvious. There are a few words which might be construed as formal, but it should be pointed out that most of these are "riverboat jargon" that we would expect Huck to know and use.

Part Two - Sentence Construction

Since the approach to this part depends heavily on the background of students with the grammar of the sentence, only general suggestions can be shown here. Students should be encouraged to use whatever analytical means they have learned previously to fulfill this part of the assignment. In general, students should notice that sentences in Life and Tom Sawyer are longer, more complex, less fragmented, and more heavily modified than the utterances in Huck Finn. Students should be able to apply this nicely to previous discussions of written and spoken discourse, and they should also notice the skill with which Mark Twain has developed the effect of spoken conversation in Huck Finn.

Part Three - Tone of the Narrator

Students should be able to amplify earlier discussions of the relative effectiveness of Mark Twain's "spoken" and "written" passages. Statements should recognize the differences in the persona, and appropriate examples should be expected.

Appendix B UNIT TEST

NOTE TO TEACHER: You will wish to choose from the items in Parts I and II depending on various aspects of the unit which you emphasized. See note at end of test.

Part I: Short Answers

1. The primary form of language is (speech).
2. The letters and marking used in writing represent (speech sounds).
3. The International Phonetic Alphabet has (more) symbols than the alphabet we commonly use in writing.
4. In our writing system, there is no way of representing the (gestures) -- that a speaker may use while speaking.
5. A characteristic that is natural or firmly infixed is (inherent).
6. A characteristic that depends on accepted practice is (conventional).
7. The person who translates thoughts into a coded message is the (encoder).
8. Interference in a communication situation is called (noise).
9. The physical means by which a communication message travels is the (channel).
10. The person who receives and retranslates a message is the (decoder).
11. The speaker can usually see audience reactions, but the writer must imagine them. We call this imagined (feedback).
12. The thing that is named or represented by a word is a (referent).
13. Comparing writing and speaking, which is usually considered formal? (writing).
14. Personal letters and notes are generally formal or informal? (informal).
15. Those who set the usage standards are usually the (educated) people in the society that uses the language.

Part II: Short Essays

1. One of the major generalizations in the unit was that the differences between spoken and written language tended to be INHERENT, while those between formal and informal, as well as those between standard and non-standard, tended to be CONVENTIONAL. What problems can you imagine if someone who was writing a usage textbook tried to use the same rules for written and spoken language?
   (OMIT FOR LESS ABLE STUDENTS.)

2. Read EXCERPTS 2, 3, and 4 again. Which selections do you prefer? Decide the purpose of the author, and find the selection that best fulfills the purpose. Support your answer.

3. The selection from All The King's Men showed a speaker using a spoken, informal, and sometimes non-standard style when he had planned a formal, written speech. Find another example of this and show why it was done.

4. Why do educated people set language standards? Why do we generally follow them?

5. Most school situations demand that you use formal, standard language conventions. For what reasons, then, should you be familiar with informal and non-standard conventions within the approaches of writing and speaking?

6. How can the writer use the notion of FEEDBACK to aid his writing?

7. Imagine that you are a political campaign speaker who is campaigning in an impoverished region where most of the people are uneducated. You wish to tell them that you are going to get federal assistance for them if you are elected. Write a brief, one paragraph speech, showing as exactly as possible how you would say this to your audience.

8. Write a short speech on the same topic that you would deliver to a group of college professors from that region.

NOTE: There obviously are more questions here than the eighth grader can answer in a one-hour test. Students should be asked to write only a few of these. Part II of this test could be used as a take-home test as well.